

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 04883 181652Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7965
INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 4883

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI

SUBJECT: SHARIA: THE WALKOUT CONTINUES AND THE CA ADJOURNS

REF: (A) KADUNA 0488, (B) LAGOS 4700, (C) LAGOS 4562,
(D) LAGOS 4190

1. NORTHERN MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (CA)
ARE CONTINUING THEIR BOYCOTT OF THE ASSEMBLY'S
MEETINGS. CONTRARY TO THE EXPECTATION OF MANY
SOUTHERN MCA'S LAST WEEK (REF B), NO NORTHERN MEMBERS
TURNED UP AT CA SESSIONS EITHER TODAY OR YESTERDAY.
2. AS AN APPARENT RESULT OF THE CONTINUED NORTHERN ABSENCE,
THE CA ADJOURNES FOR THE WEEK AT NOON TODAY.
THE ASSEMBLY PLANS TO RECONVENE ON MONDAY, APRIL 24 TO
CONTINUE ITS DELIBERATION ON CHAPER, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS,
OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION.
3. IN OTHER NEWS FROM THE SHARIA FRONT, SMALL DEMONSTRATIONS
OCCURED ON APRIL 14 IN KADUNA AND ZARIA AGAINST THE CA'S
REFUSAL TO ESTABLISH A FEDERAL SHARIA COURT OF APPEAL.
AS REPORTED IN REF A, SA AMSMALL CROWED ASSEMBLED BEFORE
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 04883 181652Z

AND AFTER JUMAT PRAYERS AND MARCHED THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF KADUNA.
APRIL 17 PUNCH REPORTS A SIMILAR DEMONSTRATION IN ZARIA
WITH A CROWED ESTIMATED TO NUMBER 5000 CARRYING PLACOARDS
READING 'NO SHARIA, NO MOSLEMS, NO NIGEIRA.' AND 'IF
SHARIA IS NOT GRANTEXD, NO PEACE IN NIGERIA.' AFTER SINGING,
MUSLIM RELIGIOUS SONGS, THE DEMONSTRATION DISPERSED
PEACEFULLY ACCORDING TO THE PUNCH ACCOUNT.

4. COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND THAT A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS HAVE BEEN TABLED AT THE CA CONCERNING CHAPTER 4 AND THE SECRETARIAT NEEDED AN ADDITIONAL TIME TO PROCESS THEM. HOWEVER, WE SUSPECT THE CA'S ADJOURNMENT IS INDICATIVE OF THE FACT THAT IT FINDS ITSELF IN A HOLDING PATTERN UNTIL THE RESOLUTION OF THE SHARIA CONTROVERSY. IN THE MEANTIME, THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT A CONTINUED NORTHERN BOYCOTT WILL PROVOKE A HOSTILE SOUTHERN REACTION. UNTIL NOW, MOST SOUTHERN MCA'S HAVE VIEWED THE WALKOUT WITH BEMUSED TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING FOR WHAT THEY FEEL ARE LOCAL NORTHERN POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS. HOWEVER, AFTER TODAY'S ADJOURNMENT, MCA OLADUNNI AYANDIPO (OYO) COMMENTED TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE NORTHERNERS SHOULD REALIZE THERE WAS A LIMIT TO THE USEFULNESS OF THE WALKOUT TACTIC.
WYMAN

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